

are not working or are looking for work in the months during which they receive aid. Income eligibility thresholds in many States are so low that even meager earnings make a family ineligible for AFDC.

I do not subscribe to the theory that the vast majority of persons on welfare are able-bodied persons who do not want to work. Research has provided evidence that there is much movement between welfare and work, and that the average time spent on welfare is about 2 years.

When I was elected to Congress last March I told my constituents that I was committed to ending welfare as they knew it and to making AFDC the transitional program it was intended to be—a bridge over troubled waters. But I was not committed to the bill that was voted on today.

The legislation that was passed by this body and will be signed by the President will move over 1 million children and 2.6 million families further into poverty, without any safety net provisions or proof that there will be jobs available that allow them to earn a livable wage.

In the State of California there are more than 2.5 million families on welfare: 1.8 million children and 800 thousand adults. What will happen to those families when the promise of a job is not kept and there are no means by which parents can put food on the table?

This reform bill will have disastrous financial consequences for California and Los Angeles County. California alone will be subjected to 40 percent of the Federal funding loss over the next 6 years, totaling \$10 billion of an estimated \$25 billion in lost revenue.

In Los Angeles County, the estimated 93,000 legal immigrants who would lose SSI benefits would still be eligible for county-funded general relief. The annual increase, however, in county costs could total \$236 million if all 93,000 applied for general assistance, putting LA county's budget into a further deficit.

My State and my constituency will bear the full weight of the disproportionate fiscal impact that will ultimately undermine the fiscal health of Los Angeles County.

The current welfare system doesn't work and hadn't worked for a long time. However, in our attempts to aid the families who are on welfare gain economic self sufficiency, we should have been careful not to hurt our Nation's children and bankrupt the counties in which they live.

#### CORRIDOR H

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from West Virginia [Mr. WISE] is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. WISE. Mr. Speaker, as Congress heads home today for the August recess, and I will be driving home via Route 55, and in much of the eastern Panhandle and eastern part of our State during August, Route 55 and the other roads are going to be curvy. But because of action taken today, the trip will be a little bit lighter.

The Federal Highway Administration today is releasing its Federal record of decision on corridor H. The record of

decision is a very significant milestone for this important highway because it is the final signoff for authorizing the West Virginia Division of Highways to proceed with the final design, including the right of way designation. Now the State can begin advertising for engineering for the final design process.

Mr. Speaker, this work is important, and it has been done and achieved because of work done by Governor Caperton and Senator BYRD particularly. Because of Senator BYRD, about 20 percent of the funding is already appropriated. Governor Caperton has provided the matching funds in the West Virginia legislature, so that roughly \$200 million is banked to begin this construction. Their efforts and the teamwork of the entire congressional delegation have kept this vital project moving forward.

Now corridor H enters what is known as the contract planned phase that physically locates the actual route, identifies the property owners, does the negotiations. Ground breaking could begin as early as year's end.

This record of decision reflects the analysis of engineering, economic and environmental issues. To those concerned about environmental issues, and I have been involved in this from the very beginning, particularly on a segment between Buckhannon and Elkins where we satisfactorily resolve those issues, and now many people happily drive that four-lane segment.

To those concerned about environmental issues, they should know there has been review, and it is reflected in the ROD issued today, the record of decision of acid mine drainage, excess excavation and flooding issues. We have suffered again flooding in significant parts of eastern West Virginia, as I speak, and you should know and people should know that once again these areas are flooding. Corridor H has not been built there.

To those who are concerned corridor H would make that situation worse, aggravate it, they should know that it does not change the flooding situation in those segments, and so construction of corridor H does not affect the flooding that we have seen. We flooded, incidentally, in many parts of the State that do not have corridor H yet. We flooded three times this year already.

This highway is over 100 miles long, running from Elkins to the Virginia line.

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, if the gentleman would yield, you mentioned the Virginia line, that it runs to my district, and I had expressed concern. I keep hearing the West Virginia officials talking about dumping traffic in my area. We have decided in Virginia we do not want corridor H.

I would ask the gentleman to deal with the West Virginia highway officials to resolve this matter, because if this matter is not resolved, I may very well come out and do everything in my

power to kill corridor H from the Virginia line clear on into West Virginia.

Mr. WISE. Taking my time back, I appreciate the gentleman's remarks. The gentleman and I have talked before, and we are interested in building corridor H in West Virginia. If the gentleman chooses not to build it in Virginia, that is fine. We think that it is an important project for our State. What is done in Virginia is the decision of my colleague and the Virginia officials, and I would hope that we could continue to work together on that.

I would like to be able to complete my remarks.

Mr. WOLF. If the gentleman would just yield for a second, just so I can make it on the record. I am not involving myself in West Virginia, as you know, but I am concerned about the statements that the West Virginia Highway Department is now saying we are going to bring it up to the edge and dump it into Virginia; that will show the people in Virginia.

I would ask the gentleman to look into that.

Mr. WISE. Reclaiming my time again, I am happy to work with the gentleman. As I say, I think the gentleman and I can satisfactorily conclude what is done in West Virginia. We will build in West Virginia. We are not trying to affect Virginia, and Virginia's decision is Virginia's decision. We respect the gentleman for what he wants to do in Virginia, and we ask his respect for what we want to do in West Virginia.

Having said that, I think this project is importantly moving ahead in West Virginia. This is a significant day, and those in the eastern end of the State can know that this project has reached that very, very important point.

Yes, it very likely there could be an environmental lawsuit filed; we will see what happens as a result. But the important thing is that with this record of decision, many of these concerns have already been looked at, reviewed, satisfactorily met. We can now begin to move ahead. Hopefully we could see a ground breaking take place somewhere along this 100 mile segment between Elkins and the Virginia line sometime by the end of the year.

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For those who have waited many, many years, today is an important day. We have many more obstacles and many more challenges ahead of us, but the trip home is going to be a little bit better today because of this decision on corridor H.

#### INTRODUCTION OF H.R. 3950, THE G.I. BILL OF HEALTH

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Maine [Mr. LONGLEY] is recognized for 5 minutes.